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Lombard, Illinois

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I enjoyed being home very much — except I was a bit disappointed in the wild plums. I still think the kind of woods one finds in Illinois, Iowa, and Southern Michigan are about the best I have seen, except there's so little of them.

Am sending Mushroom hunters field guide to Dave as Birthday present. Please forward if he's gone when it arrives.

You got a nice house there. Only one thing wrong with it. It's in Chicago area.

If by any chance you haven't thrown out those Cow-parsnip roots, and if they haven't gotten moldy or something, please send 'em to me. I forgot them. If you have thrown them out, don't worry about it.

The trip back to Calif. Got to Lisbon bank a little before closing time and took

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out coins. [Parenthetically, I am considering the possibility of selling some of my "dead" collections that are complete and no longer of interest to me: e.g. Mercury dimes, Roosevelt dimes, Jefferson nickels, Washington quarters. If by any strange chance you should be interested in acquiring any of these coins, let me know, and I'll give you first chance at them if I decide to sell any.] It was too late to go on to next desirable camp, so I just camped out at the place where I go carp-fishing. Next morning I caught a carp and had it for brunch, along with some tomato soup and corn meal. Started at about noon, and camped that night at an uninteresting place in Nebraska. Next stop was in Wyoming, same place I camped on the way east. Saw 3 antelopes and chased them on foot. Unsuccessfully, I hardly need add. But I can't help thinking it would be fun to try to hunt them

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with spears by getting 4 or 5 guys in good condition for running and trying to herd an antelope toward the river, where you could corner it. That would be going right back to the Paleolithic! But it probably would be illegal or something. However, I suppose you could just try to hit the thing with a thrown stone, then you could get out your picnic basket and pretend you're eating antelope meat.

Anyway, those vast open semi-desert Wyoming ranges give you a tremendous feeling of freedom. But too barren. Not completely barren though. I found 4 edible plants there; a kind of dock (greens) (but looking pretty woe-begone); Lambs-quarters (greens — later in the year will produce edible seeds) but it was bitter. Not bitter elsewhere, maybe the bad soil here made it bitter; Prickly pear (but small ones); and a kind of plant belonging to the mustard family. I haven't identified the exact species yet; but most everything in the Mustard family is edible, so I tried a

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small quantity of it. Raw, it was terribly hot — practically inedible. (This is typical of Mustard family.) Cooked, all hotness disappeared. Both the greens and the thick, turniplike taproot were tender and digestible. The root seemed nourishingly starchy. But unfortunately it was rather bitter.

[Back to Iowa; I forgot to mention; I found some great big wild cherries, at least as good as the ones in your yard; I found a pear tree with sweet but somewhat woody pears; a peach tree with two perfectly good peaches on it. I gathered a bunch of ripe acorns there, and I will try to put them through the treatment to make them edible.]

Next stop Wells, Nevada. too hot on plains, but sufficiently cool way up on the mountain, where I camped (not far from where I camped on way east, but higher up mountain). Beautiful little pond there (they call it a lake) produced by damming a little stream.

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Some people caught some fish there. I saw a deer there. I climbed up the mountain as far as I dared (climbing looked dangerous higher up) and got beautiful panoramic view. Bet I could see 100 miles — literally. Very stimulating. Found a kind of cactus there. You can cut it open and cut out the insides with a knife — good to eat raw, but not as juicy as one might hope. Cattle grazing on mountain side. Next stop, Berkeley. Ugh. Hippies and congestion. Water shut off at my house. had to go 2 days without own water supply because Water office closed on the obscure holiday of "admission day". I don't know whether that's the day Calif. was admitted to the union or the day the H_2O Dept. admits it is all fucked up. When Water office finally opened Tues. morning I found out some Mr. Stoller had called and had my H_2O supply put in his name, then failed to pay the deposit, so H_2O

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shut off. The water company said he probably gave them wrong address, so all O.K. now. ~~Tues. Tues.~~ Tues I drove up to Humboldt county for deer hunting. 5 hour drive. Arrived late Afternoon. "King's range" the place is called. Federal lands, right along Pacific Ocean. Mountainous terrain. Same place I went last year. Was there about 5 days; didn't get a buck only through my own carelessness, as will be explained shortly. Place is teaming with deer, for instance I saw 18 deer on one day. Trouble is, most of the deer you see are does or fawns. I talked to the caretaker there, who remembered me from last year. He is a guy maybe 40 years old. Cowboy boots and Western accent. More or less ignorant, but seems like a nice guy. He said an old man and 4 boys had been running the deer with dogs and he supposed that that must "have them pretty well shook up". He also said that an

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~~and~~ awful lot of bucks had been killed there this year — ~~(illegible)~~ about 60 that he knew of personally, and that wasn't all of them. He said probably the only ones left are the old ones that have been dodging hunters for a few years, and they are too damn smart. Apparently these bucks are pretty hard to get, because ~~I gather this~~ of this reason. This guy apparently spends all day driving around this place and working at this and that, and he keeps a much-used — looking rifle with a telescopic sight in his truck — presumably to get any bucks he might see. The ~~(illegible)~~ deer season was open for more than a month before I got there, and yet this guy had ~~(illegible)~~ apparently gotten at most one buck, because he was still hunting for them, and you are ~~(illegible)~~ only allowed 2 bucks a season. He told me one day that in the morning the following had happened. He saw a buck standing up on a ridge maybe 300 yards away, too far to shoot, really but he tried a shot anyway. He ~~(illegible)~~ hit it and it ~~fell~~ ~~fell~~

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fell, but wasn't killed. He heard it "making a hell of a racket" down in the canyon, but he wasn't able to find it, so he never did get it.

Then another day he ~~[illegible]~~ told me that the preceding evening he saw some deer moving not far from his house. He went to ~~investigate~~ investigate and found a buck among them. The buck was facing him, 200 ~~[illegible]~~ feet away, so he couldn't shoot him in the side. He didn't want to shoot him in the breast because that "tears 'em all apart". So he aimed for the neck, apparently quite confident of hitting it, but he missed. He seemed quite chagrined about missing. "Next morning I drew up on a target and hit it dead on. Must have been just me I guess!" he said

Anyway, first 3 days I didn't see any adult bucks at all. I met some other guy hunting — young ~~[illegible]~~ guy maybe in his middle 20's — and we hunted together for awhile. ~~[illegible]~~ Saw lots of does but no bucks (~~[illegible]~~ except a young one with 2-inch horns, too young to shoot.)

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He apparently had hunted deer a lot before, and talked as if he knew a lot, but I don't think he knew too much, actually. I didn't like him too well, but I guess he was alright. From talking to him and other people I rather get the impression that people generally are not too fastidious about observing the details of hunting and fishing laws - which is not surprising, since the laws are kind of complicated. Anyway, I was getting kind of discouraged at not seeing any bucks, so on about the 3rd or fourth day, in the evening, when it rained, I took a walk without taking my gun along because I felt it would be too much trouble to wrap something around it to keep the water from running into the insides. I went up chemise mountain trail, and saw about 8 does on the way up. After I looked around on top, I started down again, and just a little way down the trail, what do

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I see but a nice young buck grazing along the trail, with his rear end toward me. the leaves were ~~wood~~ wet, so they didnt crunch under my feet, and the sound of the rain ~~coo~~ covered any noise I might make, so it was easy to sneak up on him, even though he moved a few ~~yo~~ yards off the trail as he grazed along. I was within about 15 feet of him ~~with~~ before he noticed me. With the rifle, it would have been a sure thing. It was so damn frustrating not to have it. I went back down again to get it, but by the time I got back up there it was almost dark. I could hear a deer (probably him) moving around in the bushes, but I couldnt see anything.

I saw another buck (or maybe it was the same ~~bad~~ buck. dont know.) at a different place along the same trail the following evening. I was walking along the trail ~~s~~ very slowly and quietly. First there was a doe that saw me before I saw her and bounded off. Then, a little further on,

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I saw something shaking the branches of a bush. I assumed it was a ~~squ~~ squirrel or a ~~bird~~ bird, because that's what it usually is, but when I got closer I saw a ~~deer~~ deer's face down in the ~~bush~~ bush, eating something. I looked at it for a few seconds to see whether it had antlers (I couldn't see at first because of ~~the~~ the leaves) and sure enough it did, but by the time ~~I~~ I saw that it did, the deer noticed me and took off. It was going fast through thick brush and trees, so naturally I missed when I took a shot at it. Probably I shouldn't have shot at it, because sometimes they run a little distance and then stop and look at you for a while. Then I would have had a better chance. Next time maybe I will know better. I wasn't more than 15 - 20 feet from that deer ~~and~~ either, before he noticed me.

Well, maybe I can get away ~~and~~ next weekend and have another chance. Also, the

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squirrel season will be open by then, so I can try my luck with them, too. But for now its back to the old grind.

Ted

P.S. When ~~you~~ ~~be~~ (Shit on that pen)
When you have the good fortune to see a buck, deer hunting is very exciting. Trouble is, seeing it in the first place depends too much on luck. Maybe if you were a real first class expert, like the Indians or something, you would be able to track them, or know better where to find them. But where to learn all that stuff? I have tried some of the tricks I have read in books, but they don't seem to work too well.

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